

6: JFK Marina Park Plan

A. INTRODUCTION

A component of the Alexander Street Master Plan is the plan to improve the JFK Marina Park.

The nearly 9-acre JFK Marina Park has approximately 1,800 feet of direct frontage on the Hudson River. The land comprising the park is composed of urban fill material, including ash from the City's former incinerator. JFK Marina Park contains one of the few municipal boat ramps in the Lower Hudson area. During seasonal use periods, the City Parks Department installs finger docks adjacent to the ramp to facilitate kayak and small boat launching. Approximately 30 boat trailer parking spaces are provided in the park, adjacent to the launching ramp. The park has approximately 130 additional vehicle parking spaces used by park visitors and occasionally by visitors to the nearby Hudson River Museum.

Under the Master Plan, JFK Marina Park would be improved to increase the opportunities for the public to access and enjoy the Hudson River and to better integrate it with Trevor Park, on the inland side of the Metro-North Railroad tracks.

B. JFK MARINA PARK PUBLIC AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS

JFK Marina Park represents a significant link in the City's Riverwalk system. As such, the City of Yonkers intends that the public and pedestrian accommodations at the park be enhanced and improved to enable more people to gain access to the river's edge. These improvements would include new pedestrian pathways, bulkhead improvements, and new public piers. Linking JFK Marina Park to the esplanade segments to the south is an important objective of the Master Plan. As discussed in Chapter 5 of this Master Plan, this linkage to the Alexander Street redevelopment area would be accomplished via a pedestrian walkway alongside the connecting causeway between the Glenwood Power Station site and the Alexander Street district. When complete, the public would have unimpeded pedestrian access to the entirety of the Yonkers waterfront, from the Scrimshaw House to the south to JFK Marina Park to the north, a distance of over 2 miles.

The sheet bulkheads along the JFK Marina Park waterfront are deteriorating and soil subsidence is evident. Bulkhead improvements to the park's Hudson River edge would be made to replace the existing deteriorating sheet bulkheads with more natural materials, with consideration given to restoring the river's tidal marsh edges (if determined possible) and, where a harder edge is needed, to using placed rock and rip-rap materials. In the immediate vicinity of the marina facilities discussed below, sheet or concrete bulkheading may be necessary to provide structural support for marina facilities, such as ramp or gangway footings and the liftwell facility.

Along the rehabilitated shoreline, the plan provides for enhanced pedestrian and park visitor facilities, including a widened pathway or esplanade with seating and low-level lighting to permit secure evening visitation. Improved landscaping using indigenous species would be

installed throughout the park to enhance the overall landscape and to better define pedestrian areas and play areas from parking and vehicular circulation areas.

Play areas would be created in several locations within the park, and informal play and recreation would be accommodated on grassed areas throughout the facility. A breakwater would be developed to shelter the marina discussed below. The breakwater would accommodate seating and viewing areas, and provide an attractive site for a gazebo that would serve as a public use landmark on this section of the Hudson shoreline.

The Master Plan would site a restaurant in the park near the JFK Memorial Drive entrance ramp. A new restaurant building would not exceed 5,000 square feet. The City of Yonkers intends that the restaurant accommodate diners of diverse income ranges. Like the marina facility discussed below, the restaurant would be constructed and operated by a carefully selected concessionaire.

It should also be noted that a small inlet between JFK Marina Park and the Glenwood Power Station would be restored to its natural state during the course of other improvements at the park.

C. JFK MARINA PARK MARINA FACILITY

The most prominent feature of the Master Plan as it relates to JFK Marina Park is the creation of a marina facility. The Master Plan improvements for JFK Marina Park, shown in Figure 6-1, calls for the establishment of an approximately 115-slip marina in the Hudson River that would utilize the northern half of the park's shoreline. The Master Plan guideline is that no more than 50 percent of the JFK Marina Park frontage be utilized for marina purposes to ensure that at least 50 percent of the park's waterfront is freely open for public enjoyment without any constraints on usage. As discussed in earlier chapters of this Master Plan, improvements at JFK Marina Park would also be accompanied by improvements in the Alexander Street waterfront area to the south. The improvements in the Alexander Street waterfront area will provide new access to the river's edge along over a half mile of shoreline. An additional approximately two-tenths of a mile of access would be gained through creation of the Alexander Street causeway. Further, the existing public boat launch at the northern end of the park is to remain in place and fully accessible to the public for trailer launching and the launching of small craft, such as canoes and kayaks.

Establishment of the marina facility would require that the floating dock field be sheltered from Hudson River currents. To do so, the existing northernmost earthwork pier of the park would be extended into the Hudson River by either adding a floating pier, or by depositing fill to create an approximately 350-foot breakwater, or protective pier. Figure 6-1 shows a conceptual plan for this breakwater, as well as a conceptual area from which this breakwater fill could be obtained. From the end of this extended pier, a floating wave attenuator would extend approximately 800 feet in a southerly direction, partially enclosing the marina field. The docking facilities could consist of floating finger docks running perpendicular to the river, extending from a floating gangway running alongside the permanent bulkhead, from which finger docks would be accessed. The finger docks could contain approximately eight double-berths for vessel dockage. The City of Yonkers would expect that prospective concessionaires would offer more detailed designs for engineering and permitting processes.

The Master Plan considers the new breakwater to be a multi-purpose waterfront park feature. In addition to providing protection to the marina facility, the breakwater would provide sitting areas

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and fishing access as well as dedicated dock space for the Yonkers fire boat and police vessels. The Master Plan also includes a pier located centrally in the park to serve larger vessels, such as dinner cruise operators or ferries; transient dockage would be provided at the central pier.

The Master Plan includes necessary dry-land facilities to support the marina operation. Provisions for a travel lift and liftwell for removing boats from the water would be constructed in the protected area formed where the permanent park bulkhead intersects with the breakwater. This facility would enable the launching and hauling-out of power boats and sailboats, and permit their transport to the adjacent parking area for dry-land winter storage. The existing trailer parking area would be used for winter boat storage. Based on the size of the existing trailer parking area, the winter storage area would accommodate approximately 54 vessels. During the recreational boating season, this parking area would continue to serve as public trailer parking for boaters using the launch ramp. This Master Plan anticipates that no existing unpaved park area would be paved for use as winter boat storage or public trailer parking.

A 5,000-square-foot service building is proposed to be located adjacent to the east side of the existing boat launch ramp to serve as a maintenance building for stored boats. A small “marina office” would also be constructed near the access ramp to the main dock gangway to oversee marina operations and provide security for the marina and boatyard operation.

The City of Yonkers intends that the marina facilities would be constructed and operated by a private concessionaire, the selection of which would be subject to rigorous procurement standards. The City of Yonkers recognizes that several activities associated with the creation of the marina facility and extended breakwater would require the issuance of permits and approvals from New York State and federal agencies. These activities are expected to include dredging and filling. Design, engineering, and necessary environmental studies will be undertaken at the time when approvals are sought.

D. PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR CIRCULATION AND PARKING

As discussed above, emphasis would be placed on improving and enhancing public pedestrian access and facilities throughout the park, and maximizing the connections between this park and the public open spaces and esplanade to the south.

Parking improvements included in the Master Plan for JFK Marina Park consist of landscaping and minor layout modifications intended to address aesthetic and circulation issues. Boat trailer parking for approximately 32 trailers and an additional 46 cars would continue to be provided in the area where it is currently located, and this area would function as winter boat storage during the off-season months. Approximately 112 parking spaces would be provided in the central portion of the park, in the area adjacent to the JFK Memorial Drive access ramp structure.

The southbound section of JFK Memorial Drive would be extended farther southward to provide vehicular access to the Glenwood Power Station site and any new residential and retail construction on Development Parcel S. The alignment of this extension would closely parallel the Metro-North right-of-way.

In addition to creating the north-south connections along the Hudson River, the Master Plan would reinforce public pedestrian connections between JFK Memorial Park and the adjacent Trevor Park. Although this Master Plan does not address Trevor Park, it recognizes the value of strengthening connections between the JFK Marina Park and Trevor Park. Improvements being

undertaken by the Hudson River Museum include an enhanced walkway from Warburton Avenue to the museum, and a walkway in front of the façade of the museum to a newly created landscaped plaza area on the western, or Hudson River, side of the museum. The pedestrian walkway over the Metro-North tracks could be improved to enhance the connection between these two adjacent City parks.

Further, on the Trevor Park side of the JFK Memorial Drive overpass, this Master Plan encourages minor landscape and walkway improvements that would enhance the transition from JFK Marina Park to the rear plaza of the museum and the lower portions of Trevor Park. These improvements, while not part of this Master Plan, could provide a more integrated pedestrian circulation system that would create a more pleasant and safer means for Museum Middle School students, Hudson River Museum visitors, Trevor Park users, and neighborhood residents to gain access to the waterfront parkland. Further, these connection improvements could enhance access to the northbound platform side of Metro-North's Glenwood station. *